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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we stand in awe of You. Lord, when babies die at a church school, it is time for us to move beyond thoughts and prayers. Remind our lawmakers of the words of the British statesman Edmund Burke: All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing.

Lord, deliver our Senators from the paralysis of analysis that waits for the miraculous. Use them to battle the demonic forces that seek to engulf us.

We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

REPEALING THE AUTHORIZATIONS FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE AGAINST IRAQ—Resumed

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will re-

sume consideration of S. 316, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 316) to repeal the authorizations for use of military force against Iraq.

Pending:

Schumer amendment No. 15, to add an effective date.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. WARNOCK. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

S. 316

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday, by a large bipartisan vote of 65 to 28, the Senate invoked cloture on legislation repealing the Iraq AUMFs of 2002 and 1991. We will continue voting on amendments over the course of today, and Members should expect the final passage on repealing the Iraq AUMFs as soon as tomorrow.

I want to thank both sides of the aisle for their cooperation and bipartisanship. This has been a reasonable process here on the floor, with votes on amendments brought forth by our Republican colleagues. I hope this process can serve as a blueprint for how the Senate can work into the future and in the next few months for sure. We will have amendments without being dilatory. We will have debate without bogging down the process. We will look for opportunities to advance bipartisan bills as we did over the past 2 years.

So, again, I hope this AUMF portends good things to come. I hope it can

serve as a blueprint for how the Senate can work in this session of Congress as we work together to make our country a better place.

I want to thank Senators Kaine and Young, Chairman Menendez, and all of the cosponsors of this legislation for their good work.

WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE

But, unfortunately, there are disturbing trends here in the Senate, and one of the most disturbing is what the Senator from Alabama is doing to weaken our national security. For a long time, both parties have worked together to quickly confirm the routine promotions of generals and flag officers without partisan bickering, without needless delay. Confirming military promotions is one of the most important responsibilities of the Senate—a charge that rises far above normal political fights. But, today, one Member—one Member, the Senator from Alabama—is blocking the routine promotions of 160 generals and flag officers because he objects to women within the military getting access to reproductive care.

It is very simple. The senior Senator from Alabama wants to make the healthcare decisions for the women of our military, and the Senator from Alabama is holding up scores of military nominees, who have not done anything to be treated this way, until he gets his way.

The women of our military are more than capable of making their own decisions when it comes to their health. They do not need the senior Senator from Alabama making decisions on their behalf, and they certainly do not need any Senator throwing a wrench in the functioning—the vital functioning—of our military when they, our military, work every day to keep us safe.

So the Senator from Alabama risks permanently injecting politics into the confirmations of routine military promotions. The Senator from Alabama

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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risks permanently injecting politics into the confirmations of routine military promotions. And that would risk our entire national security. For what? So he can push the MAGA hard line on blocking women's choice, which is something that most women in this country—that most people in this country—reject? That is beyond the pale.

Now, let's be clear. The Senator from Alabama's delay of 160 routine military promotions is reckless. It puts Americans' security in jeopardy. The 160 nominees who are on hold, all of whom have worked to earn their promotions and all of whom we need to protect our security, include 5 three-star generals, commanders for the U.S. naval forces in the Pacific and Middle East—leaders who are confronting the likes of China and Iran—and the U.S. Military Representative to the NATO Military Committee, which is especially important right now as Russia continues its war in Ukraine.

So let me say it again. This level of obstruction of routine military promotions is a reckless departure from the Senate norm. None of us want to live in a world where military appointments get routinely politicized, and that is just what the Senator from Alabama is doing. He is inflicting unnecessary damage to our military leadership. It would paralyze the Senate if all of us had to take one rollcall vote after another just to confirm routine, apolitical, qualified generals and other flag officers.

I know that Members of both sides of the aisle feel passionately at times about certain issues. We all do. But if every one of us went to the floor and said that we are holding up every general, every admiral, every flag officer until we get our way, our military would come crashing down, would be in shambles, and our national security would be in jeopardy. But that is just what the Senator from Alabama is doing. The obstruction is dangerous—dangerous—for our national security.

I urge my colleague from Alabama to think about it. Why shouldn't a Member on this side block military appointments? Why shouldn't any other Member on that side on things they believe in just as passionately as he believes in his issue of choice? The proper place to take it up is on the floor of the Senate and the House as a legislative proposal, not as hostage-taking and taking hostage of our generals and admirals and people who deserve a promotion.

I urge my colleagues, my Republican colleagues on the other side, to speak out and to certainly speak to the Senator from Alabama and tell him how reckless this is. Several of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, to their everlasting credit, have voiced their concerns with the Senator from Alabama's action. Our colleagues, our Republican leadership, should convince him to stand down and let these military promotions go through.

DEBT CEILING

Mr. President, now on the debt ceiling, this morning, Speaker MCCARTHY stated in an interview that he sent a letter to President Biden demanding the two sit down to talk about the debt ceiling. He has been saying that for a very long time, but for a very long time, he has not shown us any plan.

To date, Speaker MCCARTHY has failed to unite his conference behind a single proposal that can win 218 votes. We are hearing a lot of contradictions and U-turns by the Republican caucus in the House and lots of outlandish proposals that would harm a lot of Americans, but as far as a plan goes, the Republican leadership still has none. When the Speaker is asked about specifics for his plan, all we get is crickets. All we get is crickets.

Republicans have been flailing. One day there is a term sheet. Then there is having a budget. Then there is not having a budget. Now there is a supposed amorphous \$4 trillion number. But the only thing missing is a real plan. You can't just pick a number out of the sky and say this is a plan. Of course it is not. You can't just put a number on the floor of the House and try to get it to pass.

So when Speaker MCCARTHY points fingers at Democrats, all he is doing is deflecting from problems he has in his own conference—that those on the MAGA right want to pull one way and those who are more mainstream want to pull another way, and he can't bring the two of them together.

Speaker MCCARTHY says he wants to sit down with the President, but if he comes to the President's office with no specific plan, no specific details about what the Republicans want to cut, what are they going to talk about? The weather? If the two sit down, the Speaker would have nothing to say because for 3 months he has been missing the one thing that he needs most: an initial plan that can unite 218 votes.

We Democrats have had a plan—House, Senate Democrats. Pass it without brinkmanship, without hostage-taking. Do what we have done under President Trump and President Biden in the past when we have reached the limit of the debt ceiling.

We say to Speaker MCCARTHY: Where is your plan? If the two were to sit down, the Speaker would have nothing to say because for 3 months he has been missing an initial plan that can unite 218 votes.

During today's interview, the Speaker also claimed multiple times that his party is considering \$4 trillion in cuts.

Great. Fill out the specifics, where the \$4 trillion exactly comes from. Put it on the floor, Mr. Speaker. Show us the plan. Have a vote. We need specifics. You can't say you are for \$4 trillion in cuts if you can't point to specifics.

If the Speaker truly has a proposal, he should lay it out. This isn't about some amorphous, vague number; it is about having a plan. This is the central

problem with Speaker MCCARTHY's approach. It is not even possible to meet with the President and have a true meeting if he can't guarantee he will keep his conference together.

That is why Republicans should drop their brinkmanship, drop the hostage-taking, work with Democrats on a clean, bipartisan extension of the debt ceiling, and remove this cloud that is hanging over our economy that is imposed by Speaker MCCARTHY's brinkmanship.

LOWER ENERGY COSTS ACT

Mr. President, on H.R. 1, the House is expected to vote this week on Republicans' partisan, unserious, so-called energy package they call H.R. 1. All it takes is a brief glance at H.R. 1 to realize it is just a big giveaway to Big Oil, pretending to be an energy package.

House Republicans' so-called energy package would gut important environmental safeguards on fossil fuel projects. It would lock America into expensive, erratic, and dirty energy sources while setting us back more than a decade on our transition to clean energy.

Everyone admits we have to do something about the carbon that is causing global warming. We have seen all the changes that it has caused all across the country. And they want to move back 10 years at the behest of Big Oil?

It is a plan that has no support with the American people—very little—the oil interests, yes, but just about nobody else. It falls woefully short on long-overdue and much needed reforms for accelerating the construction of transmission to bring clean energy projects online. Transmission is hugely important to increasing access to clean energy, but the Republican plan falls woefully short on this front as well.

I want to make clear that H.R. 1 is dead on arrival in the Senate. It is another exercise. You can go back to the MAGA supporters back home, the big oil companies you are walking in lockstep with, and say: See, we put this on the floor, but it is not going to get anything done.

We are not going to waste our time on a bill that sets America back decades in our transition to clean energy.

A serious clean energy package would help ease America's transition to clean energy while ensuring that clean energy is reliable, accessible, and most importantly, affordable.

Fortunately, many Democrats and Republicans understand that we need a bipartisan, bicameral approach to produce a serious energy package. Everyone knows there is going to have to be give on both sides to get it done. We on our side will continue working in good faith on real permitting reform talks.

But, House Republicans, H.R. 1 is, very simply put, a nonstarter.

STUDENT LOANS

Mr. President, on the student debt CRA, yesterday, Republicans introduced legislation that would end the pause on payments and overturn President Biden's historic student loan debt

relief program, denying the millions of Americans with student debt the critical relief they need.

Republicans talk a big game about helping working families, but they are once again showing how callous and uncaring they are by blocking that relief that would immediately improve the lives of millions of families burdened with student debt.

Republicans call President Biden's plan a "giveaway to high earners." That is just false. That is just malicious. That is just nasty. Under President Biden's plan, nearly 90 percent of relief dollars would go to out-of-school borrowers making less than \$75,000 a year.

Republicans, look at the facts. Let me repeat it. Under President Biden's plan, 90 percent—nearly 90 percent of debt relief dollars would go to out-of-school borrowers making less than \$75,000 a year.

Under President Biden's plan, no one in the top 5 percent of incomes will receive a penny in debt relief. President Biden's plan is not a giveaway to high earners. In fact, there are a lot of very, very wealthy people who never want to see the government help anybody except themselves who seem to push this idea of getting rid of the President's plan.

President Biden's plan is a ladder up to the middle class for millions of Americans who need it most. Rather than help the privileged few, the Biden plan would benefit students of color, poor Americans, children of immigrants, and working and middle-class families across the country. These are the Americans who bear the brunt of the student debt crisis. They are the ones hurt by Republican legislation.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEFENSE FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, providing for the common defense is one of the core responsibilities of the Federal Government. It is, in fact, a primary reason why the Federal Government exists. In fact, the Constitution states:

The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion.

So how do we do that? How do we protect our Nation and ensure that Americans can live in peace and safety? The answer can be summed up in one word: "strength."

As Ronald Reagan said, "We know only too well that war comes not when the forces of freedom are strong, but when they are weak. It is then that tyrants are tempted." Or to put it in the words of another President, our first,

speaking 200 years earlier, "To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace." That is from President George Washington.

We secure peace by maintaining our strength. So what does that mean in practice? At its most basic level, of course, it means maintaining a strong military and national intelligence apparatus. It means ensuring that our military is well-funded, sufficiently manned, and fully equipped to meet current and future threats. Unfortunately, we are not doing the best job at that right now.

We have military services that are struggling to meet recruiting targets. There is a persistent pilot shortage, and in a number of cases, we have too few mission-capable aircraft. Under the President's budget, Navy ships would be retired faster than we can replace them in our limited shipyards. Wargaming analysis suggests we would run out of certain long-range and precision munitions in conflicts with a great power much sooner than any American should be comfortable with. On top of that, last month, the spectacle of a Chinese spy balloon flying over U.S. military bases made it clear that there has been an alarming gap in NORAD's—the North American Aerospace Defense Command—monitoring of U.S. airspace.

Our current situation isn't being helped by the fact that the President is deemphasizing investment in our military. The budget he just introduced for next year requests a massive hike in nondefense spending compared to a mere 3.2-percent increase for defense.

In fact, the supposed increase in defense spending isn't really an increase at all. The increase the President is proposing fails to keep pace with current levels of inflation, which means that his defense spending hike is really a defense spending cut—and not for the first time.

In November of 2018, the bipartisan National Defense Strategy Commission released a report warning that our readiness had eroded to the point where we might struggle to win a war against a major power like Russia or China. The Commission noted that we would be especially vulnerable if we were ever called on to fight a war on two fronts.

We have made some progress since then, but we are definitely not there yet. We have to make continued investment in our military and our readiness a priority. We need to be prepared to meet any threat because that will allow us to deter almost any threat.

Reducing investment in our military—as the President has proposed—would leave us in a situation where we could have difficulty defending our Nation or our Nation's interests if attacked.

It is worth noting, too, that while the President deemphasizes funding for our military, hostile powers are not doing the same.

China recently announced that it is increasing its defense budget by 7.2 per-

cent this year, after increasing it 7.1 percent last year.

We need to continue to reinvest in our military, address recruitment challenges, and ensure that our men and women in uniform—and our intelligence personnel—have what they need to meet and deter the threats of the 21st century.

The most basic requirement of national strength is a strong military. And that isn't the only requirement. Investment in our military and national security apparatus needs to be accompanied by commitments to border security, energy security, and more. Border security—and here, I am talking not just about physical security at our borders but also enforcement of our immigration laws—is an essential part of keeping our Nation secure.

Porous borders—or lax immigration enforcement that allows things like visa overstays—are an invitation to criminals, terrorists, and others who would seek to harm our country.

The fact that 16 individuals on the terror watch list were apprehended attempting to cross our southern border illegally in February alone should be all the reminder we need that people who do not wish us well are seeking to enter our country.

And we need to ensure that we are enforcing our immigration laws and maintaining our borders to stop them.

I also referenced energy security as a component of national strength and security.

What does energy security mean? It means developing our domestic energy resources—both conventional and renewable—to ensure a stable and reliable supply of energy that does not depend on imports from hostile countries.

The energy challenges and soaring costs countries like Germany have faced over the past year owing to their heavy reliance on Russian energy are a timely reminder of the importance of developing domestic energy supplies.

Depending on imports from hostile nations or unstable regions not only enriches those nations, it places us in a position of vulnerability.

So far, I have talked about what we should be doing domestically to build the kind of strength that will protect our Nation and deter aggressors. But security is not just a matter of working at home to strengthen our military and secure our borders. We also need to engage globally—to build relationships with allies, support free nations, and stand against hostile actions by hostile countries.

Now, standing against hostile actions or hostile nations doesn't mean fixing every country's problems or getting militarily involved in every conflict around the globe. We are not—and cannot be—police officer to the world.

But an isolationism that would recede from any world event unless it directly and immediately affects us is dangerous and contrary to our national security interests because sooner or

later, world events—particularly those that involve powerful and hostile nations—do affect us.

We ignore the importance of security challenges, like Ukraine, at our peril. Putin is already making it clear his ambitions don't end with Ukraine. He is also occupying territory in Georgia and, seemingly, working on asserting Russian influence in Moldova and the Balkans.

A Putin victorious in Ukraine would be on the doorstep of four former Soviet satellite states—now NATO members whom we are bound by treaty to protect—and he would likely be emboldened. War could spread, which would compound the existing humanitarian catastrophe cost, cost U.S. lives, and spell economic disaster not only for European countries but for the United States, which trades heavily with Europe.

For the sake of our own security, we cannot afford to sit by and ignore the Ukrainian conflict. Helping Ukraine fight its fight degrades Russia's capability and helps ensure that the United States and NATO troops won't have to fight a war with Russia. And it sends a clear message to Russia and other nations with imperial ambitions that aggression will not go unanswered away.

I would also note that along with isolationism, we need to be wary of the tendency to focus on one global threat to the exclusion of others. China, which is flexing its military and economic power and threatening the safety of Taiwan, should rightly be a major focus right now.

But it cannot be the only one. For those who, for example, contend that U.S. support for Ukraine is a distraction from the threat that China represents, I would argue that the outcome in Ukraine and upholding Ukraine's sovereignty has significant implications for China and Taiwan.

It appears Japanese Prime Minister Kishida would agree, as he traveled to Kyiv 1 week ago—a trip not undertaken lightly given that Japan is neighbors with Russia, China, and North Korea.

We know that Chinese leader Xi Jinping is watching the West's response to the war in Ukraine closely. And our support—and NATO's support—of Ukraine can send a powerful message to General Secretary Xi that he should think twice before making any move across the Taiwan Strait.

In addition to confronting the dangers posed by great powers, we also need to continue to maintain focus on threats in the Middle East and Africa, including ISIS and Iran and their proxies.

In the past week, there have been multiple strikes on American forces in Syria, with attacks tracing back to Iran-backed militia groups. And we need to continue to make it clear that hostile action against Americans—like last week's attacks—will not be tolerated.

Iran is fomenting unrest in the Middle East, moving closer to enriching

weapons-grade uranium, and sending drones to Russia to support its war on Ukraine. Meanwhile, it is looking likely that Russia will supply Iran with modern fighter jets, making Iran an even more deadly presence in the Middle East.

We cannot afford to ignore Iran any more than we can ignore China, Russia, or any other serious threat to peace and stability. We need to remain engaged on the global stage—always pursuing peace but always ready to respond to those who would jeopardize it.

Above all, we can't be afraid to call evil by its name. Ronald Reagan never declared war on the Soviet Union. But he helped bring down the Evil Empire, in part, by not being afraid to speak with moral clarity.

There will always be threats to peace and security. And it must be our job to ensure that the United States always has the strength to meet them. There is no surer way of preserving the peace or protecting the heritage of freedom that we have been given.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). Without objection, it is so ordered.

SOIL ACT

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I wanted to be able to come back to the floor to talk about the SOIL Act. The SOIL Act is a bill that I introduced last year that deals with Chinese ownership of land in the United States.

Since I have introduced this bill, several of my colleagues here in this room have also introduced other bills that are similar to it. Good. That means people are paying attention to this and the conversation is starting. I am all for as many ideas as we can get out here on how to be able to solve this because the most basic principle that we have right now is, if we miss an obvious trend that is happening here, it is to our economic peril.

This chart has just a very simple number on it. In 2020, Chinese entities owned almost 200,000 acres of land in the United States. One year later, they are at almost 400,000 acres in the United States—in 1 year. This is from 2020 to 2021. This trend is happening all over the country, and we are certainly seeing it in my State of Oklahoma.

When I travel around my State, I hear people talk about the border; I hear people talk about the economy; and I often will hear people say: Hey, there is a lot of foreign ownership going into land right now in Oklahoma, and it is dramatically affecting the price of real estate, the price of agricultural land but also what is happening on that land.

Now, my State may be a little bit different than some others or it may be

that the same thing is happening in your State.

About half a decade ago, my State did medical marijuana legalization. It was a decision of the voters of my State to be able to say they want to get access to medical marijuana for those who need it. The problem is that Chinese entities and Chinese criminal organizations and Mexican cartels immediately flooded the market in our State, and we have seen a rapid rise in marijuana in our State, much of it done in the illegal market. It is not just happening for the “medical” side in our State; it is being distributed all over the country from my State.

Just a few months ago, I was looking on different worldwide news sources and was shocked to see in the BBC News headlines for that day a story about my State on the global news headlines about a group of Chinese nationals who were shot execution-style in a grow operation in Oklahoma. The individual who executed them was on the run and then was arrested in Florida a couple of days later. He was also a Chinese national.

Chinese criminal organizations have moved into my State in mass numbers. The year after marijuana was legalized in my State for “medical” purposes, we had more land sales to foreign entities in Oklahoma than any other State in America as Chinese criminal organizations and Mexican cartels immediately moved in to be able to set up shop in distribution nationwide.

Many people said they didn't think it was legal for foreign entities to be able to own land in the United States. Well, there is a gap, actually, in our law. It is an issue that I want us to be able to deal with on how we are going to challenge this issue.

Let me give you just another perspective beyond just the Chinese side of things—another perspective on this. Ten years ago, 321,000 acres in Oklahoma were owned by a foreign entity—10 years ago. Today, it is 1.67 million acres in my State are owned by a foreign entity—from 321,000 to 1.67 million acres. There is a rapid transition that is happening. Foreign entities are rapidly buying up land. I will tell you, if you are a farmer and rancher, they would say, you know, there are some things God is just not making more of, and one of them is land. You can't just give that up.

This is a problem. It is a problem nationally. It is not just a problem in the marijuana industry; it is a problem nationally. It is a problem dealing, quite frankly, with our national security. We currently have a 1-mile buffer around all of our military installations that you can't own land if you are a foreign entity within 1 mile around our military installations. We now believe that is not nearly enough.

Quite frankly, foreign nationals from many countries like China are buying up the land around our critical infrastructure, around our telecom infrastructure, around military bases,

around government offices. They are not buying it because they are looking for another place to invest. They are buying it to set up shop for their own operations and their own spying and their own control of our economy. We should pay attention to this.

As we deal with different entities, like data or healthcare entities, they have to go through a process. It is called the CFIUS process. It is that process, the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States—the abbreviation you will hear for Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States is CFIUS. That process includes entities like the Treasury, Commerce, Defense, the intelligence community—they all have to be involved if a foreign entity wants to be able to buy, let's say, a telecom company or they want to buy a lot of big data around a hospital, whatever it may be. It has to go through that process on that.

Agricultural land is not in that though. There is no review for that. So there is no prioritization for foreign investment of our land, even where it is, so this has become an “out of sight, out of mind” issue.

The bill that I have called the SOIL Act does a mandatory review of CFIUS of that process—the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States—for agricultural land and the entity. That is in two categories: if they are a national security threat—that country is a national security threat—or they are what is called a nonmarket economy.

Let me explain what those two things are. The national security threat is pretty straightforward. That is China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea. If China, Russia, Iran, or North Korea want to buy land around the edge of one of our military bases, right outside that 1-mile buffer, if they want to buy lots of land around our infrastructure or telecom, it is not for our good. We should have a review of that.

The second thing is a nonmarket economy. This is an economy that is run by the government, not by private business.

Again, China would fall squarely into this as a communist nation. You cannot run an investment business—especially a foreign entity outside of China—without it running through the Communist Party in China, so they are a nonmarket economy.

One of the most basic parts about this is, if you are going to buy any kind of land in the United States and you are from one of those countries that is a nonmarket economy or that is a national security threat, we should have a mandatory review of that so they could actually do that kind of purchase. But we just want to know why, where, how much, what is the purpose of this, and we can ask those practical questions of it.

The SOIL Act that I have also tries to close some of the loopholes that are in our Federal law. Let me talk through a couple of those. Currently,

we have a foreign entity—let's say a Chinese entity—that is doing an ag purpose there, they would still be available for agricultural subsidies in the United States. Well, that needs to be closed.

We shouldn't do agricultural subsidies for any entity that is a foreign entity coming into the United States doing investment, so it closes that loophole. It closes all of the disclosure loopholes dealing with agricultural landholdings.

Right now if you have a landholding that is around 10 acres, then you don't have to disclose it. Well, a lot of these operations are less than 10 acres, and there is a lot that you can do on 10 acres if that 10 acres also happens to be right on our critical infrastructure, right on our telecom, or maybe it is also doing a criminal operation.

Also this deals with issues of long-term leases. Entities would come in and say, well, we are not really buying the land, we are just doing a 99-year lease. Well, that is the equivalent of actually owning the land, and so it gets around that loophole.

It also beefs up our enforcement for those who violate our foreign investment laws. It also requires annual reporting, for China and Russia in particular.

Listen, I am not trying to stop foreign investments into the country. If BMW wants to be able to come do manufacturing here in the United States for their cars or Nissan or any number of manufacturing products that are here from all over the world, they are welcome to be here. They are welcome to do foreign investment.

But when Iran is buying up a big chunk of land, we should ask the question why they are doing that. And, currently, we don't even have a process to do that. When China is snapping up land by the hundreds of thousands of acres, we should ask the question: Why is China buying hundreds of thousands of acres of American land all of a sudden? What is the goal?

We should ask that question; and, currently, we don't have a process to do that. So let's fix that. The SOIL Act gets on top of that issue and says we see the trend. Let's not just watch this go sideways; let's actually engage. And let's protect our national security, and let's protect our national interest.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COVENANT SCHOOL SHOOTING

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, yesterday the Nation witnessed a murderous rampage at an elementary school, a small Christian school in Nashville, TN. Tragically, three small children, 9

years old, lost their lives; three employees of this school lost their lives. And even as I am on this floor now, Nashville police are releasing the body cam footage of the officers who responded with heroic speed and heroic courage to the deranged individual who made her way into that school and was executing students and teachers one by one.

Those officers deserve to be praised; they deserve to be thanked; they deserve to be honored for what they did and for the lives that they saved.

We must also tell the truth about what happened yesterday in Nashville. This murderous rampage, this taking of innocent life was a horrific crime; but, more specifically, it was a hate crime. A crime that, according to Nashville police, specifically targeted—that is their word—targeted the members of this Christian community, the members of this religious institution, its students, its educators, its employees.

Let's be clear, Federal law prohibits the targeting of violence against any American on the basis of religious affiliation or religious practice or religious belief.

But that is, according to police, exactly what we saw happen yesterday. The members of this community were singled out because of their religious affiliation. And now, three young children are dead, and three educators are dead because of their affiliation with this religious institution, because of their beliefs, because of their work, because of their service. That is a crime under Federal law, and it must be treated as such.

Today I have called on the director of the FBI and the Secretary of Homeland Security to open a Federal investigation, a Federal hate crime investigation, into what happened in Nashville. We need the facts. We need to know about the premeditated crime. We need to know about what this shooter did and intended to do. We need to know about the influences. What kind of violent rhetoric motivated this shooter? Were there others involved?

This contagion of hateful rhetoric and violence must not be allowed to spread, and that is why we need all Federal resources, according to Federal law, devoted now on the ground in Nashville to get the facts and to stop the violence from spreading further.

And I call on this body, every Member of this body, to condemn, in the clearest of terms, this hate crime against this community in Nashville. Today, I will introduce a resolution explicitly condemning this massacre as the hate crime that it is and calling upon this body to condemn hateful rhetoric that leads to violence. Hateful rhetoric against religious believers, religious institutions, religious communities that leads to violence.

This isn't speculation; this is a tragic fact. It is happening before our eyes, and we must condemn it. And I would call on those corporate partners who

are so quick to weigh in on social issues, now, make your voice heard. Condemn this violence as the hate crime that it is. Stand with this community in Nashville. This is a time to be heard. This is a time to be clear about what has happened and is unfolding before our very eyes.

And let's just be crystal clear, rhetoric about days of vengeance and genocide, rhetoric directed against religious believers of whatever background—whether they are Presbyterians like the students and teachers and employees targeted yesterday or some other Christian affiliation or Orthodox Jews or Catholics or whatever the religious background—it is a crime under Federal law to target and commit acts of violence against Americans because of their religious beliefs, because of their religious affiliation, because of their religious practices.

This should not happen in the United States of America, and now we must act to see that it does not spread.

And so I hope the Senate will soon take up my resolution. I hope that every Member of this body will be clear about what has happened in Nashville and will be clear in standing against the violence, in standing against the hate, in standing against the rhetoric, in standing with this community that needs now our support, that needs now our encouragement and condolences, yes, but also needs our action.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

AMENDMENT NO. 11

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, last December, the World Health Assembly established an intergovernmental negotiating body to draft a new convention on pandemic prevention and preparedness.

At its fourth meeting last month, the negotiating body accepted a draft of this new convention that would give the World Health Organization broad new powers in managing future pandemics. If accepted, it would cement the World Health Organization at the center of a global system for managing future pandemics, and it would erode U.S. sovereignty.

Let me just list a few of the examples of some of the provisions of this draft—and I will call it a treaty. Currently, it would require a substantial new U.S. financial commitment to an international body without proportional voting power.

It would require the U.S. to give the World Health Organization 20 percent of vaccines and other pandemic-related products produced during future pandemics. It includes a heavy emphasis on the transfer of intellectual property rights to the World Health Organization.

It gives the World Health Organization a leading role in fighting misinformation and disinformation, and as the Twitter files reveal, that leads to censorship and the suppression and abridging of freedom of speech.

It also promotes a global one-health approach to healthcare, including harmonizing regulation under WHO guidance. The WHO has not earned this power—far from it. At a critical moment in late 2019 and early 2020, the WHO utterly failed to detect the emerging COVID-19 pandemic and delayed in forming its member states. Instead, it was kowtowing to Beijing.

Unfortunately, there are indications that the Biden administration is considering joining this new convention by executive agreement and avoiding the Senate. We should not let this happen. An agreement of such magnitude needs to be submitted to the Senate for advice and consent. This is not a partisan issue; this is about reclaiming the Senate's prerogatives on international agreement.

Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 11 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Wisconsin [Mr. JOHNSON] proposes an amendment numbered 11.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require any convention, agreement, or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response reached by the World Health Assembly to be subject to Senate ratification)

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 3. ANY WORLD HEALTH AGENCY CONVENTION OR AGREEMENT OR OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENT RESULTING FROM THE INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATING BODY'S FINAL REPORT DEEMED TO BE A TREATY SUBJECT TO ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “No WHO Pandemic Preparedness Treaty Without Senate Approval Act”.

(b) **FINDINGS.**—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) On December 1, 2021, at the second special session of the World Health Assembly (referred to in this section as the “WHA”) decided—

(A) to establish an intergovernmental negotiating body (referred to in this section as the “INB”) to draft and negotiate a WHO convention (referred to in this section as the “Convention”), agreement, or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response, with a view to adoption under article 19 or any other provision of the WHO Constitution; and

(B) that the INB shall submit a progress report to the Seventy-sixth WHA and a working draft of the convention for consideration by the Seventy-seventh WHA, which is scheduled to take place beginning on March 18, 2024.

(2) On February 24, March 14 and 15, and June 6 through 8 and 15 through 17, 2022, the INB held its inaugural meeting at which the Director-General proposed the following 5 themes to guide the INB's work in drafting the Convention:

(A) Building national, regional, and global capacities based on a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

(B) Establishing global access and benefit sharing for all pathogens, and determining a global policy for the equitable production and distribution of countermeasures.

(C) Establishing robust systems and tools for pandemic preparedness and response.

(D) Establishing a long-term plan for sustainable financing to ensure support for global health threat management and response systems.

(E) Empowering WHO to fulfill its mandate as the directing and coordinating authority on international health work, including for pandemic preparedness and response.

(3) On July 18 through 22, 2022, the INB held its second meeting at which it agreed that the Convention would be adopted under article 19 of the WHO Constitution and legally binding on the parties.

(4) On December 5 through 7, 2022, the INB held its third meeting at which it accepted a conceptual zero draft of the Convention and agreed to prepare a zero draft for consideration at the INB's next meeting.

(5) In early January 2023, an initial draft of the Convention was sent to WHO member states in advance of its formal introduction at the fourth meeting of the INB. The draft includes broad and binding provisions, including rules governing parties' access to pathogen genomic sequences and how the products or benefits of such access are to be distributed.

(6) On February 27 through March 3, 2023, the INB held its fourth meeting at which it—

(A) formally agreed to the draft distributed in January as the basis for commencing negotiations; and

(B) established an April 14, 2023 deadline for member states to propose any changes to the text.

(7) Section 723.3 of title 11 of the Department of State's Foreign Affairs Manual states that when “determining whether any international agreement should be brought into force as a treaty or as an international agreement other than a treaty, the utmost care is to be exercised to avoid any invasion or compromise of the constitutional powers of the President, the Senate, and the Congress as a whole” and includes the following criteria to be considered when determining whether an international agreement should take the form of a treaty or an executive agreement:

(A) “The extent to which the agreement involves commitments or risks affecting the nation as a whole”.

(B) “Whether the agreement is intended to affect state laws”.

(C) “Whether the agreement can be given effect without the enactment of subsequent legislation by the Congress”.

(D) “Past U.S. practice as to similar agreements”.

(E) “The preference of the Congress as to a particular type of agreement”.

(F) “The degree of formality desired for an agreement”.

(G) “The proposed duration of the agreement, the need for prompt conclusion of an agreement, and the desirability of concluding a routine or short-term agreement”.

(H) “The general international practice as to similar agreements”.

(c) **SENSE OF THE SENATE.**—It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) a significant segment of the American public is deeply skeptical of the World Health Organization, its leadership, and its independence from the pernicious political influence of certain member states, including the People's Republic of China;

(2) the Senate strongly prefers that any agreement related to pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response adopted by the World Health Assembly pursuant to the work of the INB be considered a treaty requiring the advice and consent of the Senate, with two-thirds of Senators concurring;

(3) the scope of the agreement which the INB has been tasked with drafting, as outlined by the Director-General, is so broad that any application of the factors referred

to in subsection (b)(11) will weigh strongly in favor of it being considered a treaty; and

(4) given the level of public distrust, any relevant new agreement by the World Health Assembly which cannot garner the two-thirds vote needed for Senate ratification should not be agreed to or implemented by the United States.

(d) **APPLICABILITY OF SENATE ADVICE AND CONSENT CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENT.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any convention, agreement, or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response reached by the World Health Assembly pursuant to the recommendations, report, or work of the International Negotiating Body established by the second special session of the World Health Assembly is deemed to be a treaty that is subject to the requirements of article II, section 2, clause 2 of the Constitution of the United States, which requires the advice and consent of the Senate, with two-thirds of Senators concurring.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, this amendment is very simple, it declares any pandemic convention produced by the intergovernmental negotiating body to be a treaty requiring Senate advice and consent.

I had a similar amendment on the Iranian agreement a few years ago. It is far past time that the Members of this body reclaim our Constitutional authority at ratifying these incredibly serious treaties and no longer allow the administration to go ahead and negotiate agreements that can have a dramatic impact on our sovereignty and bypass the Senate entirely.

So, again, a very simple amendment, it would deem any amendment a treaty and require that it be ratified by the Senate, and I urge all my colleagues to support my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the amendment, not because my colleague from Wisconsin is completely wrong about the need for WHO accountability. The facts he stated are facts that are troubling. But the bill that is on the floor is a bill to repeal the Iraq war authorizations of 1991 and 2002. The bill has nothing to do with global health or the WHO.

The Senate has not repealed a war authorization since 1971—52 years. This is a historic debate.

When we authorized the wars in Iraq, the Gulf war and the invasion of 2003, we did it in authorizations that didn't include extraneous amendments. The Senate deemed these important enough that other matters, even if they were important, were not added onto the declarations of war.

I strongly believe we should take up this repeal, keep it limited precisely to the question on the floor—should we repeal the Iraq war authorizations—and not add in extraneous matter, even if that matter has some merit.

And for that reason, I would ask my colleagues to vote against the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, there is nothing in my amendment that

would harm what the Senator from Virginia tried to accomplish in repealing the authorization for use of military force. So my amendment can be accepted and have no impact whatsoever on the legislation before the floor or the body.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 11

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 11.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL).

The result was announced—yeas 47, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 71 Leg.]

YEAS—47

Barrasso	Fischer	Paul
Blackburn	Graham	Ricketts
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Braun	Hagerty	Romney
Britt	Hawley	Rounds
Budd	Hoeben	Rubio
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Collins	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Lummis	Tillis
Crapo	Marshall	Tuberville
Cruz	Moran	Vance
Daines	Mullin	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	

NAYS—49

Baldwin	Kaine	Schatz
Bennet	Kelly	Schumer
Blumenthal	King	Shaheen
Booker	Klobuchar	Sinema
Brown	Lujan	Smith
Cantwell	Manchin	Stabenow
Cardin	Markey	Tester
Carper	Menendez	Van Hollen
Casey	Merkley	Warner
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Warnock
Duckworth	Murray	Warren
Durbin	Ossoff	Welch
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden
Heinrich	Reed	Young
Hickenlooper	Rosen	
Hirono	Sanders	

NOT VOTING—4

Coons	Fetterman
Feinstein	McConnell

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). On this vote, the yeas are 47, the nays are 49.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 11) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. RICKETTS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be up to 4 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to the votes on the remaining amendments today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 30

Mr. RICKETTS. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 30 and ask that it be reported by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nebraska [Mr. RICKETTS] proposes an amendment numbered 30.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require a certification)

Amend section 2 to read as follows:

SEC. 2. REPEAL OF AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE AGAINST IRAQ RESOLUTION OF 2002.

(a) **REPEAL.**—The Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (Public Law 107-243; 116 Stat. 1498; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note) is hereby repealed 30 days after the President certifies to Congress that Iraq, Israel, and other United States partners and allies in the region have been meaningfully consulted on the ramifications of repeal.

(b) **DESCRIPTION OF RISKS.**—The certification submitted under subsection (a) shall include a detailed description of how Iraq, Israel, and other United States partners and allies in the region perceive the risks and benefits of a repeal.

Mr. RICKETTS. This amendment is very simple. It is less than 150 words long. So I ask that you take some time to consider it.

What it does is ask the administration to check in with our allies in the Middle East—Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Israel, UAE—and let them know what we are doing with this amendment.

I agree in principle that we ought not let these things hang out there for 20 years, but I am concerned about the timing because, in my trip to the Middle East last month, what I heard from our allies is that it looks like we are withdrawing from the Middle East. And what that does is it emboldens Iran, it emboldens China, and it encourages our allies in the Middle East to start looking to hedge their bets from America and start, maybe, bringing in the Chinese as part of their security arrangements. And I think that is bad for our country, and, certainly, I think we can all agree we do not want China to be leading a world order here; that the United States is the best for providing peace and prosperity.

What this amendment does is just ask the administration to check in with our allies, issue a report back to Congress, and, in 30 days after Congress, then the AUMF would expire. So I just ask that everybody please consider that.

With that I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the amendment. I support the notion of dialogue, of course, with our strategic partners and allies, but the purpose of this AUMF repeal is for Congress to reclaim war powers and not outsource them to the Executive but also not outsource them to other nations.

When we passed the Iraq war authorization in 2002, there was no requirement that it only went into effect if we

then went out and had dialogue with other nations. Why would we declare war unilaterally but then say the only way to repeal it is following dialogue with other nations?

Our allies and partners are very aware of this bill. It has been on the floor for 2 years. There have been floor debates about it in the House. There have been two separate markups in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. They are very aware of it.

All of us meet with Ambassadors. All of us meet with Parliamentarians. If nations in the region felt that there was any danger to this, they would have let us know. I will conclude and just say that the American Legion also strongly opposes this amendment. I would ask my colleagues to oppose it as well.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 30

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question occurs on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. RICKETTS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL).

The result was announced—yeas 31, nays 65, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 72 Leg.]

YEAS—31

Barrasso	Hagerty	Rounds
Blackburn	Hoeven	Rubio
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Britt	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Capito	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Mullin	Tillis
Crapo	Ricketts	Tuberville
Ernst	Risch	Wicker
Fischer	Romney	
Graham	Rosen	

NAYS—65

Baldwin	Hawley	Paul
Bennet	Heinrich	Peters
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Reed
Booker	Hirono	Sanders
Braun	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	Kelly	Schmitt
Budd	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Lee	Sinema
Carper	Lujan	Smith
Casey	Lummis	Stabenow
Cassidy	Manchin	Tester
Collins	Markey	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Marshall	Vance
Cramer	Menendez	Warner
Cruz	Merkley	Warnock
Daines	Moran	Warren
Duckworth	Murkowski	Welch
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden
Grassley	Ossoff	Young
Hassan	Padilla	

NOT VOTING—4

Coons	Fetterman
Feinstein	McConnell

(Mr. WARNOCK assumed the Chair.)

(Mr. HICKENLOOPER assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJAN). On this vote, the yeas are 31, and the nays are 65.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 30) was rejected.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 today.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:34 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. LUJAN).

REPEALING THE AUTHORIZATIONS FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE AGAINST IRAQ—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

AMENDMENT NO. 9

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 9, and I ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Texas [Mr. CRUZ] proposes an amendment numbered 9.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide findings related to the President's constitutional authority to use military force to protect the United States and United States interests)

On page 2, line 3, strike "The Authorization" and insert the following:

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Article II of the United States Constitution empowers the President, as Commander-in-Chief, to direct the use of military force to protect the Nation from an attack or threat of imminent attack.

(2) This authority empowers the President to use force against forces of Iran, a state responsible for conducting and directing attacks against United States forces in the Middle East and to take actions for the purpose of ending Iran's escalation of attacks on, and threats to, United States interests.

(3) The Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (Public Law 107-243; 116 Stat. 1498; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note) is not independently required to authorize the activities described in paragraphs (1) and (2).

(b) REPEAL.—The Authorization

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, there is no responsibility we have as Members of Congress more serious than protecting the men and women who defend this Nation. We are facing a national security crisis due to Joe Biden and his administration, which have repeatedly been unwilling to act against repeated hostilities from the nation of Iran. They have looked repeatedly for excuses to justify that inaction.

Now, I want to be clear. I am not where some Members of this body are who want to maintain this authorization for use of military force. I want to vote to repeal this authorization for use of military force. The Iraq war was a long time ago, and I believe the Iraq war was a mistake at the time it was fought. I would be enthusiastic about Congress reasserting its war-making and war-declaring power by repealing the AUMF.

But, at the same time, I don't want the repeal of the AUMF to be used as an excuse by the Biden administration to roll over and do nothing if and when Iran attacks and murders American soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines in the Middle East. And this is not hypothetical.

Just last week, General Milley, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, testified before the House that from January 2021 until last week, there were 78 attacks against American forces in the Middle East by Iranian-linked fighters—78. The Biden administration responded 3 times; 75 of them went unresponded. Tragically, but predictably, appeasement doesn't work.

On Thursday morning, the CENTCOM Commander was testifying in front of the House. Here on the floor of the Senate, we were debating this very issue of the AUMF and Iranian aggression. We now know that, at 6:30 in the morning eastern time on Thursday, Iran attacked U.S. forces, murdered a U.S. citizen—a U.S. contractor—and wounded six other Americans. That happened at 6:30 in the morning eastern time on Thursday.

The Presiding Officer didn't know that on Thursday. I didn't know that on Thursday. None of us knew that on Thursday. Why? Because the Biden administration kept it a secret for 12 hours because they didn't want to tell the Senate, while we were debating this issue, that an American had just been murdered by Iran. That is disgraceful. The Presiding Officer should be angry about it; I should be angry about it.

My amendment is very simple. My amendment restates that under article II of the Constitution, the President has the authority to defend U.S. troops and to respond to Iranian aggression.

The opponent of this bill, my friend Senator KAINE, will speak shortly. What he said to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was that the amendment is unnecessary; that article II already does that. Well, good. If it is unnecessary, then the Democrats ought to support my amendment and add it. Because I will tell you what it will get: If we add this amendment, I will vote yes on the AUMF repeal. If we don't add this amendment, I am a no.

Here is why: I don't want to give an excuse for the Biden administration, the next time Iran attacks, to do nothing. If it is unnecessary legally, it ought to be an easy give to say, "Let's add it, to be clear, that if you attack U.S. forces, the President has the authority to respond," because I don't